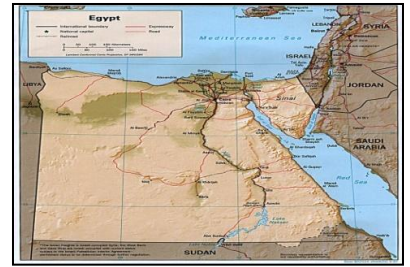


## Egypt: “The Gift of the Nile”

### Location

Located in the north-east corner of the African continent, Egypt is mostly comprised of harsh desert country. Making life habitable however, The Nile River flows lengthwise through Egypt traveling from south to north before spilling out into the Mediterranean Sea.



### Khemet

Every year snow melts high in the mountains of Africa causing the Nile River to swell its banks. As the water rushes over the land, it picks up silt, or soil mixed with bits of plants and deposits it on to the desert floor. When the water recedes and goes back to a normal height, silt is left on the land. This new layer of nutrient rich soil made farming possible around the Nile River Delta.

The Nile Delta was nicknamed Khemet, the Arabic word meaning, “Black Land,” because of the color of the land after the floods. Without the annual floods, farming would not be possible in Egypt.

### Irrigation

The Egyptians used the Nile’s water to irrigate their crops. By digging ditches, the water would flow along a path to the fields. Egyptians grew mainly wheat and barley. Without irrigation canals, there would be no water for the plants to grow.



### Papyrus - Another gift from the Nile

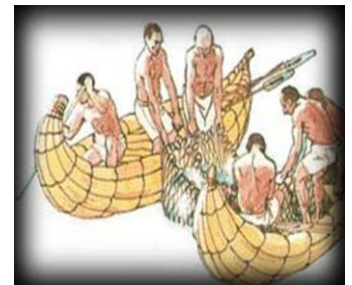


Papyrus was a reed-like plant that grew on the Nile’s banks. Papyrus stalks were cut into long strips and woven together to make paper. Papyrus could also be used to make boats, rope and baskets. Egyptian now could record their history using paper made from papyrus. This raw material was vital in helping produce many products.

*Did you know that the word paper is derived from the word papyrus?*

### Transportation

Egyptians used the Nile River to trade and transport goods with many other civilizations. Large barges would carry cargo easier across water than over land. Ships, small boats, and rafts were all used to trade and travel from place to place.



### A River Teeming With Life

Egyptians used fishing spears, harpoons, nets and traps to catch fish along the Nile. This was a major food source for ancient Egyptians. Fishermen had to be careful because of the crocodiles that lurked beneath the surface. Some of the fish caught were the Nile perch eel, catfish, carp and tilapia. By fishing and farming Egypt could support larger populations.